

Comments on the effects of budget cuts to CT State Library Services.

Gail K. Ryan

Simsbury Resident and member of Simsbury Library Board of Trustees

02/17/2017

Before retiring I worked in libraries for over 35 years and am now a member of the Simsbury Library Board of Trustees. I have worked with and used borrowIT and ConnecticAR before it and know what an invaluable service it is to both libraries and patrons.

Currently, any library card holder in the state can go into any public library in the state and borrow items. Libraries are reimbursed for lending these materials. The reimbursement for each transaction, for which the average cost is \$1.05, is only \$.22. Libraries depend on reimbursement monies for funding important programs. For a cost of approximately \$800,000, the borrowIT program saves libraries about \$58,000,000, the cost of the nearly 4 million items borrowed. Also, the borrowIT items represent 15% of the total circulation in Connecticut's public libraries. If the funding is lost, many libraries will have to charge outside borrowers a yearly membership fee—a fee that will have a greater impact on patrons in lower income brackets—to borrow from their collections; federal matching funds will be lost; and circulation will go down.

This could mean a direct loss of approximately, \$18,818 to Simsbury Public Library in FY18, and also in FY19. This funding, by statute, comes directly to the Library not the Town general fund, and is used by the Library each year to pay maintenance contracts on our circulation equipment through the Library Board discretionary account. It's loss will be devastating for our library and its patrons.

Thank you for considering restoring these funds to the Governor's budget.

Gail K. Ryan

Simsbury Public Library Board of Trustees